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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 53rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 10 October 1996, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GERVAIS (Côte d'Ivoire)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1996/93)

The agenda was adopted.

SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS (continued)

(d) HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS (continued) (E/1996/101; E/1996/L.53)

The PRESIDENT drew the attention of the Council to the report of the Secretary-General on follow-up and monitoring of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/1996/101), which had been requested by the Council in its resolution 1996/38.

Mr. KOVANDA (Czech Republic), Vice-President, introduced draft decision E/1996/L.53 entitled "Follow-up and monitoring of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which had been agreed as a result of informal consultations.

Mrs. CASTRO de BARISH (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the Group of 77 and China were pleased with the report of the Secretary-General, which provided useful information on the legal aspects of the matter. In a spirit of consensus, they had agreed to simplify the original text of the draft decision. Although they would have preferred a more complete text, they were satisfied that the Council's intention to follow up on that important issue had been reflected in the relevant Council documents. She hoped that the decision could be adopted by consensus.

The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should agree to waive rule 54 of the rules of procedure and take action on the draft decision at the current meeting.

It was so decided.

Draft decision E/1996/L.53 was adopted.

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (continued) (E/1996/102/Add.1 and Corr.1)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to turn to document E/1996/102/Add.1 and Corr.1, which contained, in its paragraph 5, a draft decision recommended by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations for adoption by the Council.

Mr. GIROUX (Canada) said that the Assembly of First Nations was a Canadian organization and not a United States organization, as listed in the document.

Ms. TAMLYN (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position before adoption of the draft decision, said that her delegation would join the consensus on the draft. Its understanding of the procedure for accrediting indigenous organizations was that Governments were invited, but not required, to comment on applications. Therefore, when the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations had forwarded to the Council the applications of the Fondation Auravetl'an and the Organización de la Nación Aymara, it had recognized that the relevant Governments might make comments at a later date. Thus, those applications should not be considered provisional pending receipt of comments from the Governments.

The draft decision contained in paragraph 5 of document E/1996/102/Add.1/Corr.1, as orally amended, was adopted.

Mr. VAUGHN-FENN (United Kingdom), supported by Mr. BIGGAR (Ireland), said that his delegation had joined the consensus so that the organizations listed in subparagraph (b) of the draft decision could participate in the session of the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. His Government did not view the accreditation of those organizations as provisional; comments from the Governments of Liechtenstein and Peru would be appreciated, but were not necessary.

Mr. BARRETO (Observer for Peru) said that the Organización de la Nación Aymara was not listed in his Government's register of non-governmental organizations. His delegation did not oppose its provisional participation in the Working Group, but its participation had been approved on a provisional basis, pending receipt of his Government's views.

The meeting rose at 10.40 a.m.